

What's the Matter With Washington? SHOULD WASHINGTONIANS VOTE, OR DOES PRESENT GOVERNMENT BEST SATISFY DISTRICT NEEDS?

Washington All Right, Says Commissioner Macfarland, Pointing Out Dangers of Partisanship—Frederick L. Siddons Says Suffrage Is Needed, and Citizens' Desires Are Not Met, Quoting Ottawa's Rejection of the System—John L. Weaver Suggests Methods of Equalization of Tax Burden.

Out of the intense interest aroused in Washington by The Times' editorial of March 9, entitled "What's the Matter With Washington?" have come three expressions of opinion on the subject so important that The Times publishes them today, giving them preference over the remainder.

One from Henry B. F. Macfarland, president of the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia, denies the allegation that the National Capital is unduly unhealthy, and refutes the claim that the suffrage right should be exercised in the District.

Another, from John L. Weaver, secretary of the Washington Board of Trade's committee on commerce and manufactures, deplores existing conditions in regard to assessments for real and personal property taxations, and suggests a plan for bettering these conditions.

The third, from Frederick L. Siddons, one of the city's best-known attorneys, declares that the District's government is "inherently defective," and that some way must be found to enable our people to govern themselves.

Mr. Macfarland and Mr. Siddons are directly opposed as to the merits and demerits of the present form of government in the District. But this very contradiction of views lends to each an added value, for by them The Times is enabled to submit to the people masterly explanation of each side of the case. And it is in this presentation of both sides of every disputed point that The Times and the public generally can hope to arrive at a proper understanding of the problems which confront us and the solutions possible for them.

In the statements published today, and in those which will be published in these columns each Sunday, it will be impossible for any one man to cover all the points raised in the questions of the editorial, "What's the Matter With Washington?" It is designed to secure from the officials and prominent men of the District their views on the questions in which they are most vitally interested.

By HENRY B. F. MACFARLAND,
President of the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia.

When William Allen White wrote "What is the matter with Kansas?" it was only that he might answer with a hearty, "Kansas is all right." Pessimists and cranks, in hard times caused by crop failures, had brought Kansas to humiliation before the world by their jeremiads and quack remedies. Kansas was the butt of the humorous paragraphers of the country because of what her own citizens said about her. Many Kansans left the State. Home seekers and capitalists avoided it. Then William Allen White rendered it the greatest service that it has received from any of its sons, when with equal sanity and optimism he turned the tide with his famous editorial which answered the pessimists with the encouraging facts and the cranks with sensible criticism. Good crops coming opportunely restored prosperity to the State just as White's editorial restored its self-respect and gave it once more the respect of the country.

If Washington should ever be brought by pessimists and cranks availing themselves of circumstances to the humiliating position in which Kansas found herself, I trust that another William Allen White may do for Washington that White did for Kansas. Then will be the time to ask, "What is the matter with Washington?" and to reply with prompt and hopeful loyalty, "Washington is all right."

Perfection Not Expected.

But, at the height of our prosperity, with advantages which no other city has and with no disadvantages which other cities have not, possessed of the respect of the world and with our self-respect intact, it should go without saying that Washington is "all right." Not that Washington is perfect any more than Kansas was perfect when White came to the rescue. No one expects perfection in this world in any human institution, but if we are steadily making progress toward our civic ideals; if our city is growing in physical wealth and physical beauty and in moral wealth and moral beauty; if it has public spirit and civic pride; if it meets its debts and its obligations frankly but without fear; if it discards its public questions with sanity and strength and settles them reasonably and justly, and especially if there is in its municipal affairs economy, efficiency, and a total absence of graft, blackmail and corruption, it may honestly be said to be "all right." Its citizens as a body can afford to ignore the "kickers" and the "knockers" that are found in every community and usually have some grievance or some axe to grind, and go forward to do the day's work constructively and with a hopeful spirit. This is not to say that fair and candid criticism is not to be welcomed. It is indeed essential, especially under a municipal government which is one of public opinion, nor is it to say that there are not conditions which we want to change for the better; conditions which, of course, we regret and want to change as quickly as possible.

Look at All the Facts.

But it is to say that we have every reason for optimism rather than pessimism; that we want to see both the good conditions and the bad conditions in proper relations and proportion; that we want to see all the facts, and not facts selected for the purpose of supporting a particular theory; and above all, that we want to recognize, and we want our critics to recognize, that we are not blind to the worst facts, but that, on the contrary, we have been for years striving to do away with them, and that we have made progress in those efforts.

From time to time critics appear in Washington from cities which are in-

By JOHN L. WEAVER,
Secretary of the Washington Board of Trade's Committee on Commerce and Manufacture.

In The Times of March 9, 1907, you have an editorial entitled "What's the Matter With Washington?" In it you assert that "dissatisfaction with the assessments (for real and personal property taxations) prevails." Let me suggest a method by which it is believed more accurate and satisfactory valuations of real estate might be arrived at. The first essential is the establishment by the present board of assessors of a system of card records, having generally the character of a statistical bureau. On those cards entries should be made of the following:

1. All values disclosed in transfers of real estate.
2. Valuations upon which real estate mortgages are made.
3. Valuations arrived at in condemnation proceedings for street openings and like actions.
4. Valuations made by expert witnesses before any court or Governmental jury.

Appraise in Probate Court.

5. Appraisements of real estate incidental to proceedings in the probate court.
6. All other valuations fixed officially.
7. For valuations of improvements the records of the office of the Building Inspector would afford much reliable information.

As the second essential, to make such a plan effective, legislation should be had to compel the disclosure of the true consideration in all deeds of transfer, and, if possible, the valuations upon which mortgages are based. Such legislation should also require the keeping of the data as suggested and provide funds for the purpose. The cost, however, need not be large. Once established a single clerk of ability could gather the data from many sources and keep the record up to date.

Equalizing Tax Burdens.

The established information suggested, together with the right to take expert testimony, would enable the board of assessors, in my humble opinion, to reduce the dissatisfaction you note to a minimum, and would altogether eliminate the charge that one class pays more taxes than another.

In affording citizens an opportunity to ventilate views on the vital question of taxation, would enable the board of assessors, in my humble opinion, to reduce the dissatisfaction you note to a minimum, and would altogether eliminate the charge that one class pays more taxes than another.

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By FREDERICK L. SIDONS,
One of the Most Prominent Lawyers in the District of Columbia.

"What's the Matter With Washington?" Not much that cannot be corrected, but which, if not corrected, will before long retard the growth of the National Capital in a manner that every sensible man and woman should not desire to see.

I read your editorial, and, taking up the question that you asked in it, "What's the matter with the District Government?" I have no hesitation in saying that, in my judgment, on its legislative side, it is inherently defective, unsound and utterly opposed to the spirit of our political institutions and, in saying this, I wish it understood that I speak not from any theoretical standpoint, but from an essentially practical view.

Over ten years ago I delivered, in Cleveland, an address before the National Municipal League, on the subject of the municipal condition of Washington, and in doing so, said, among other things:

Two Small for Congress.

"Dependent as we are upon Congress, its failure as a municipal legislative body threatens the future of the District. And yet it should not surprise thinking people that a legislature, charged with the parliamentary affairs of a nation of sixty-five millions of people and formulating currency and tariff policies, today finds difficulty in coming to the consideration tomorrow of whether it will grant an appropriation to lay a sewer or pass an ordinance concerning the disposition of garbage in a community of less than three hundred thousand persons. This was never contemplated by the Constitution makers and certainly Congress is not adapted to the performance of such legislative duties. Indeed the difficulty of legislating even in its legitimate sphere of action is occasioning much perplexity to the students and admirers of our political institutions. Is it a wonder then that the petty details of municipal legislation encounter the impatience, indifference and even disgust of the national legislators, important though that legislation may be to the comfort, security and general welfare of the people of the District of Columbia?"

"Citizens of the District are frequently told by the friends of the present system that Washington is and was designed to be a Federal city, and it is eminently proper that such a city, belonging to the people of the whole country, should be legislated for by the Congress of the United States; that the affairs of such a city concern the people of the whole country, and that, therefore, they will be fully cared for by the people's representatives. That sounds well enough, but what does it amount to as a fact? The old adage that 'What is everybody's business is nobody's business' comes home to the citizens of Washington at every session of Congress with peculiar force. With rare exceptions the average Congressman expects about as much information on District matters as a Hottentot may be supposed to possess, and he doesn't seem to want any more. The result is that time and again important local legislation suffers assaults from some ignorant member, and is finally defeated because the House or Senate has no knowledge or interest in the measure under consideration."

System Will Break Down.

The sobering years that have passed since the foregoing words were uttered have but served to confirm me in the conviction that they present a sound criticism upon the form of government which has been established for the District of Columbia, and, as the city grows in population and in various and vary-

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Horse Adds and Spells, Works the Cash Register, And Puzzles Scientists



PRINCESS TRIxie.

Horse That Displays Remarkable Intelligence and Will Be Seen at Jamestown, With Her Owner and Trainer, W. Harrison Barnes.

Princess Trixie Has Appeared Twice Before King Edward.

"I've always believed in the horse as the most intelligent animal, and maintained that by a system of training hitherto untried, as far as I know, horses might be educated to a far greater extent than any other member of the brute creation. Trixie has certainly vindicated my assertion, in that she stands today as the most highly educated horse of this or any other age," says W. Harrison Barnes, owner of Princess Trixie, a horse that will be shown at the Jamestown Exposition. "How did I commence her development? Well, I'll tell you. When she was but about three weeks old I took her into the house and allowed her to run about as she pleased, her principal companions being my children, who played with her the same as they would with a dog or other domestic pet. She soon lost all nervousness with human beings. I taught her to come when I called or

whistled and she gradually began to understand what was said when we spoke to her. I then set about teaching her the letters of the alphabet, and figures, and as she progressed I found it possible to teach her simple examples in spelling, addition, multiplication, etc., till now Trixie possesses a fair knowledge of the first four rules of arithmetic. "Add to this her knowledge of music, her capabilities of determining the various colors of ladies' dresses, in her manipulation of the cash register, registering the sales and giving the correct change, and I think you will agree with me that Princess Trixie is the best educated horse in the world. "She occasioned much discussion in London. The Psychological Research Society held an investigation, a committee of some of the best known scientists in England was appointed, and gave as their opinion that it was the most remarkable case of animal education the world has ever known. King Edward performed on two occasions before his majesty, the first being at the Palace Theatre and then by royal command at Windsor Castle, in order that Queen Alexandra and the family might have an opportunity of seeing her work."

CONSTITUTION CANNOT GO; CANONICUS FOR JAMESTOWN

Old Monitor Will Be Fitted Up With Quaker Guns and Put in Similar Condition to What She Was At Time of Civil War.

Patriotic Americans who had hoped to get a look at the historic old iron frigate, Constitution, at the Jamestown Exposition, next summer, are doomed to disappointment, as it has just been decided by the Navy Department that the ship is totally unseaworthy and that there are not ample funds with which to repair her for the trip to Norfolk. The Constitution is now at the Boston Navy Yard, where, by authority of Congressional action of a year ago, she is being restored to her original appearance. This step was taken following the howl that went up the country over when Attorney General Bonaparte, when Secretary of the Navy, recommended that the old ship be taken out to sea and blown to pieces. Promoters of the Jamestown Exposition grasped the opportunity and there was a plea that she be sent to Hampton Roads for exhibition.

The work of restoration was begun some time ago, but only now it has developed that the department is without

sufficient funds to complete the work of restoration as to send the ship to the exposition in time for exhibition. After a careful examination, the naval constructor at Boston has reported that it would require at least \$20,000, and perhaps \$25,000, to make the repairs necessary on the hull of the ship to enable her to make the voyage.

Appreciating the demand of the exposition for a historic ship, the department will send, instead of the Constitution, the old monitor, Canonicus, which will be fitted up with mock guns and other equipment to illustrate her original condition in the time of the civil war.

Although the department will have an extensive exhibit in the Government building at the exposition, besides having a fleet of the most modern vessels there, it is proposed to make such display as can well be done, to show the progress of the American navy and the type of vessels at different periods of the history of America.

PITTSBURG MOVES ALONG AS IF FLOOD HADN'T COME; DECLINES NEW YORK'S AID

Loss Estimated at \$20,000,000—Army of Men Cleaning Streets to Prevent Pestilence—Ten Thousand Lowland Dwellers Homeless.

PITTSBURG, Pa., March 16.—Although Pittsburgh business interests suffered a loss on stocks damaged by flood of \$15,000,000, while owners of small houses suffered to the extent of \$5,000,000, both Pittsburgh and Allegheny moved along today as if nothing had happened. The mayors of Philadelphia and New York offered financial aid to Pittsburgh, but Mayor Guthrie politely declined assistance. The fire departments of Pittsburgh and Allegheny, aided by an army of 15,000 men, started in to clean things up today. The water has gone back into the rivers, and paying attention to the warning of the health bureau, no time is being lost in getting things cleaned up. The power plants in the downtown districts, including those of the street car and light company, are now running and the city is no longer in darkness.

Big Firms Chief Losers.

While the loss caused by the high water is conservatively estimated at \$20,000,000, this will almost all fall on the corporations, the United States Steel, American Bridge, Presser Steel Car, Union Works, Pittsburgh Railway Company, Allegheny County Light Company, Pennsylvania railroad, Baltimore and Ohio, Pittsburgh and Lake Erie railroad, and Wabash railroad, being among the heaviest losers. The skyscrapers in the downtown district, along with many department stores, automobile houses, piano dealers, hotels, and theaters are also big losers.

In the extra lowlands 10,000 persons were affected by the flood, the water forcing the unfortunates from their homes, and in many cases not a stick of furniture could be saved.

Needs No Aid.

"It was a disastrous flood," said Mayor George G. Guthrie to a Hearst representative tonight, "and cost the business interests an immense sum of money. We do not need outside aid, however, and the poor persons who suffered are being well taken care of. The corporations are the biggest losers. By Monday things will be moving along the same as before the flood."

The big army of white wings, put to work last night by the bureau of highways and sewers, had the streets in the flooded portion for the most part cleared of debris and mud. Gangs of them, armed with brooms, swept the sediment along as the water fell and hundreds of others filled wagons that followed. They worked all night and this morning Penn avenue and Sixth street were almost in their usual condition. Duquesne Way was almost a sea of mud for a few hours today, but a force of white wings made short work of it. Portions of the downtown streets were flushed with water during the night.

BOSTON'S CULINARY EXHIBITION.

The worm has turned. Boston is going to give an exhibition in the culinary art to show to a skeptical and ribald world that it knows something in this line besides pork—and—Indianapolis News.

WOMEN'S CORRECT DRESS BON MARCHÉ

EASTER HATS

Graceful as Lilies

Supreme elegance is depicted in every Trimmed Hat we show plumed or flowered. That is because they are made by artists who have given them a refreshing style that distinguishes them from all others—a difference so great as to make the hats shown here ABSOLUTELY EXCLUSIVE, and every hat at a price-difference.

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Nowhere in this or any other town is there a greater variety of stylish hats at \$5.00. Discriminating women will discover many points of superiority in them—more style—and more real worth. No two alike.

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